

Board of County Commissioners Agenda Request

Date of Meeting: May 20, 2003
Date Submitted: May 15, 2003
To: Honorable Chairman and Members of the Board
From: Parwez Alam, County Administrator *PA*
Lillian Bennett, Assistant to the County Administrator *LWB*
Subject: Consideration of Alternatives to the Current Board Meeting Schedule

Statement of Issue:

As requested by the Board, this agenda item presents potential alternatives to the Board's current meeting schedule for Board review and consideration.

Background:

At the April 22, 2003 meeting, the Board directed staff to bring back an agenda item that presents alternatives to the Board's current meeting schedule. The Board expressed that alternatives include ways to reduce the number of Board meetings held each month and include any annual cost savings that could be realized as a result.

Currently, Board meetings are held each Tuesday except for the first Tuesday of each month. This meeting schedule usually results in a total of three (3) to four (4) Board meetings a month, depending upon the number of Tuesdays that fall in each month. There is a total of 30 Board meetings scheduled for the 2003 calendar year.

Analysis:

Board direction to explore alternatives to the current Commission meeting schedule was prompted by a concern with the small number of agenda items the Board convened to consider during the month of April. To determine the feasibility of changing to a reduced number of Board meetings, this agenda item presents the following information:

- Comparisons to Other Florida Counties
- Current Board Meeting Activity
- Potential Alternatives/Cost Savings

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Comparisons to Other Florida Counties

In order to compare the Board meeting schedule of Leon County to other counties in Florida, staff has prepared a summary of the Board meeting schedules of the sixty-seven (67) counties in Florida (Attachment #1). This comparison includes the County population and meeting schedule of each County. Based on this review, staff has reached the following conclusions regarding the Board meeting schedules of Florida Counties as shown in Table #1:

Table #1 -Comparison of Meeting Schedules of 67 Florida Counties

	Once a Week Meetings	Every Week except one	Two Meetings a Month	Three Meetings a month	Four meetings a month	Once a Month Meetings	Total
# of Counties	8	6	46	4	1	2	67
Percentage	12%	9%	69%	6%	1%	3%	100%

The data in Table #1 shows that 69% or 46 out of 67 Florida counties hold two regularly scheduled Board meetings a month. Six (6) Florida counties or 9% conduct meetings every week except one each month which is similar to Leon County. The six include Leon, Broward, Manatee, St. Lucie, Sumter and Indian River Counties. Eight (8) counties or 12% percent hold once-a-week Board meetings. In addition to the summary above, Table #2 reflects the Board meeting schedules of like-sized counties in Florida. The table provides the population and the actual meeting schedule of each County.

Table #2 - Like Sized Counties Meeting Schedules

County	Population	# of mtgs a month	Meeting Schedule	County	Population	# of mtgs a month	Meeting Schedule
Alachua	228,371	2	2 nd and 4 th Tuesdays at 9:00 a.m. and 6:00 p.m.. public hearings	Leon	248,039	3 to 4	Every Tuesday(except 1 st Tuesday)at 5:00p.m.
Collier	277,457	2	2 nd & 4 th Tuesday at 9 a.m.	Manatee	277,362	3 to 4	Every Tuesday at 9 a.m.-except 2 nd Tuesday (work sessions)
Escambia	299,485	2	1 st & 3 rd Thursday, Public Forum at 4:30p.m., & Board Meeting@ 5:30p.m.	Marion	271,096	2	1 st & 3 rd Tuesday at 9 a.m.
Okaloosa	176,965	2	1 st & 3 rd Tuesdays, 8:30 a.m. & 6 p.m.	Bay	152,186	2	1 st and 3 rd Tuesday at 9 a.m.

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As shown in Table #2, of the eight like-sized counties, Manatee County is the only County that has a meeting schedule similar to that of Leon County. The remaining six (75%) of the like-sized counties (Alachua, Collier, Escambia, Marion, Okaloosa and Bay), have two regularly scheduled meetings a month. The times of the meetings vary from mornings to evenings. It should be noted, that the City of Tallahassee and the Leon County School Board holds two regularly scheduled Commission meetings a month.

Of the fourteen (14) largest counties in Florida with populations in excess of 300,000, nine (9) or 64% have two regularly scheduled meetings a month. The counties include Miami-Dade (pop. 2,312,348), Duval (pop. 800,304), Pasco (pop. 361,456), Pinellas (pop. 933,972), Polk (pop. 502,241), Seminole (pop. 387,286), Hillsborough (pop. 1,054,560) and Volusia (pop. 459,569). This demonstrates that counties' issues can continue to be addressed effectively, even with a reduced number of Board meetings. Again, the times that the large counties hold their meetings varies from morning to evening as shown in Attachment #1.

Current Board Meeting Activity

To determine the feasibility of a potential reduction in the number of regularly scheduled Board meetings held each month, staff has performed an analysis of the content of the agenda outline of Board meetings held over the past year (May 2002 - April 2003). This review includes a break out of the number of agenda items presented each meeting, as well as the category in which these items were presented: Consent, General Business and Public Hearings. The review also includes the number of public speakers for each meeting and the number of hours required to complete each meeting. Finally, the analysis provides an annual average of activity for each category presented (Attachment #2).

An analysis of the information provided in Attachment #2 is summarized in Tables #3 and #4:

Summary of Board Meeting Activity
(May 2002 - April 2003)**Table #3 - Number of Board Meetings, Public Speakers and Length of Meetings**

Total Number of Board Meetings held annually	Total # public speakers annually*	Total # of agenda items presented annually	# meetings held in 2 hours or less 5:00 p.m. to 7:00 p.m.	# meetings held within 2 to 4 hours 7:00 p.m. to 9:00 p.m.	# meetings held over 4 hours 9:00 p.m. to 11:30 p.m.
30	285	817	6 or 20%	12 or 40%	12 or 40%

Table #4 - Average Activity Per Meeting

Average # of Agenda Items	Average # of Consent Items	Average # of General Business	Average # of Public Hearings	Average # Public Speakers*	Average Meeting Ending Time	Average Length of Meeting
27	17	7	3	9	9:00 p.m.	4 hours

* The actual number and average # of public speakers on agenda items is dependent upon the issue presented. For example, there were 34 speakers on the Iraq resolution, 19 on the Broadcast Tower permitting, 18 on the Lake Lafayette SDZ.

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The length of a meeting has much less to do with the number of agenda items presented and more to do with other factors such as the time allotted for public speakers, Board discussion and the number of public hearings presented at each meeting. As shown in Attachment #2, there does not appear to be a direct correlation between the number of agenda items presented and the length of a Board meeting. For example, at the April 29, 2003 meeting, there was a total of 29 agenda items which included six (6) public hearings and five (5) public speakers. The Board meeting lasted for six hours and ended at 11:00 p.m. However, in comparison, the September 17, 2002 meeting consisted of a total of 51 agenda items which included eight (8) public hearings and fifteen (15) public speakers. The meeting lasted for 5 ¾ hours and ended at 10:45 p.m. The analysis does show that meetings which require extended time (11:00 p.m. or more) usually have an average of five (5) or more scheduled public hearings. The Board may want to consider designating one Board meeting a month specifically for the purpose of conducting public hearings. In addition, the Board may want to consider setting a time limit for public speakers on issues coming before the Board.

Alternative Meeting Schedules and Cost Savings

There are certain added costs that are incurred for each Board meeting held. These include overtime salaries and other operating expenses. Although the majority of the County staff who attend Board meetings are senior management and no additional salary expense is incurred, there are some indirect costs in addition to those employees who are paid overtime for functions used to support Board meetings. The following is a breakdown of these additional costs:

Additional Cost	Cost per Meeting (Based on average of 4 hours per meetings)	Annual Cost - 30 meetings
Bailiff's (3)	\$25 per hour	\$9,000
Communications Specialist/MIS (2)	\$25 per hour	\$6,000
Facilities on call employee (1)	\$25 per hour	\$3,000
Board Clerk (1)	No direct cost (Normally Compensatory time)	0
Food and Serving Supplies*	\$213 per meeting	\$6,390
Utilities	Minimal to no savings (Temperatures controlled by computer and A/C is not turned off at night. Savings from lighting is minimal.)	0
Agenda Copying, Production and Supply Cost	\$900 per meeting	\$27,000
Total Estimated Annual Direct Cost	\$1,713	\$51,390
Indirect Cost (Sr. Management Employees)	\$1,131 per hour (30 staff) or \$4,525 per mtg	\$135,750
Total Direct and Indirect Cost	\$6,238	\$187,140

*This cost may vary, depending on whether or not a workshop is held prior to the Board meeting.

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The Board could choose to reduce the number of Board meetings held each month which would reduce the \$187,000 annual direct/indirect cost to hold Board meetings. Alternative meeting schedules are presented below for Board consideration:

1. Conduct two regularly scheduled Board meetings a month on either the 1st and 3rd Tuesday or the 2nd and 4th Tuesday of each month. The number of meetings held annually would drop from 30 to 22. This alternative would result in reduction of 8 meetings annually and a direct and indirect cost savings of approximately \$49,904.
2. Conduct regularly scheduled meetings on the 2nd and 4th Tuesday of the month and hold Public Hearings only on the 3rd Tuesday of the month. This alternative would allow for a separate meeting to be set aside specifically for public hearings each month. This alternative also allows regular Board meetings to be scheduled earlier in the day if the Board so chooses and public hearings held in the evening to allow for citizen input. No meetings would be held on the 1st Tuesday and 5th Tuesday (if applicable) of each month. This alternative would result in a reduction of 2 meetings annually and a minimal cost savings of approximately \$12,476.
3. Maintain the current schedule and authorize the County Administrator to review the content of the draft agenda outline submitted for each meeting and advise the Chairman if a meeting can possibly be cancelled and agenda items carried over to the next scheduled meeting. The Chairman would then notify the full Board by the Wednesday prior to the scheduled Board meeting. The public will also be notified of any changes in the meeting schedule.

Due to the potential impact of previously scheduled meetings, public hearings, joint City/County comp. plan meetings, etc. already set on the 2003 calendar, it is staff's recommendation that the Board direct staff to develop an implementation schedule and bring back an agenda item for Board review and approval.

Other Issues

The Board has recently scheduled five (5) District Community Meetings to present budget issues impacting the County. These community meetings will be held in August and September 2003. In addition to the Community Meetings, at the April 29th meeting, the Board directed staff to schedule meetings with FAMU, FSU and TCC students. This came at the request of Larry Rivers, Student Government Association President, FAMU, after expressing student concerns regarding the impact of University Park.

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It is recommended that the Board direct staff to contact the student government associations of each educational institution to identify acceptable on-campus alternatives to full-scale County Commission meetings that involve dialogue concerning local government, economic development or other issues of interest to students. Staff can research the existence of opportunities for the Board to take part in panel discussions, and forums or other presentation formats deemed appropriate. In summary, staff has presented the following information for the Board to consider in adopting a reduced number of Board meetings:

- 69% of the Counties in Florida have two (2) Board meetings a month.
- 75% of like-sized counties in Table #2 above hold two (2) Board meetings a month.
- 64% of the larger counties in Florida with populations in excess of 300,000 hold two (2) Board meetings a month such as Miami-Dade, Hillsborough and Pinellas Counties.
- Locally, both the City of Tallahassee and the Leon County School Board hold two meetings a month.
- Estimated \$50,000 in annual direct/indirect cost savings as a result of holding only two (2) meetings a month.
- Leon County can continue to effectively address County issues by holding two (2) Board meetings a month.

Options:

1. Direct staff to reduce the Board meeting schedule to two regularly scheduled Board meetings a month on the 2nd and 4th Tuesday of each month and to develop and bring back an implementation schedule for Board review and approval.
2. Direct staff to reduce the Board meeting schedule to two regularly scheduled Board meetings a month on the 1st and 3rd Tuesday of each month and to develop and bring back an implementation schedule for Board approval.
3. Direct staff to schedule regular Board meetings on the 2nd and 4th Tuesdays of each month and conduct Public Hearings on the 3rd Tuesday of each month. No meetings would be held on the 1st and 5th Tuesdays(if applicable) of each month. Direct staff to develop and bring back an implementation schedule for Board review and approval.

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4. Direct staff to maintain the current Board meeting schedule and authorize the County Administrator to review the content of the draft agenda for each meeting and advise the Chairman if a meeting can possibly be cancelled and agenda items carried over to the next scheduled meeting. The Board and the public would then be notified accordingly. This option can be adopted by the Board immediately.
5. Direct staff to establish a time limit on public speakers addressing issues before the Board.
6. Direct staff to contact FAMU, FSU and TCC student government associations to identify opportunities for the Board to take part in on-campus student government activities.
7. Board Direction.

Recommendation:

Board Direction

Attachments:

1. Florida Counties Meeting Schedules
2. Board Meeting Activity (May 2002 - April 2003)

**Commission Meeting Schedules of Florida Counties
May 2003**

County	Population	Commission Meeting Schedule	County	Population	Commission Meeting Schedule
Alachua	228,371	2 nd and 4 th Tuesdays at 9:00 a.m. <u>Public hearings</u> 2 nd and 4 th Tuesday at 6:00 p.m.	Lake	227,154	1 st , 3 rd , & 4 th Tuesday at 9 a.m.
Baker	22,992	1 st Tuesday at 4 p.m. 3 rd Monday at 5 p.m.	Lee	454,073	Every Tuesday at 9:30 a.m.
Bay	152,186	1 st and 3 rd Tuesday at 9 a.m. CST	Leon	248,039	Every Tuesday(except 1 st Tuesday)at 5:00p.m.
Bradford	26,517	1 st Monday at 9:30a.m. 3 rd Thursday at 7:30p.m.	Levy	36,013	1 st & 3 rd Tuesday after 1 st & 3 rd Monday at 9 a.m.
Brevard	494,102	Tuesdays at 9:00a.m. One monthly Zoning Meeting at 5:30p.m.	Liberty	7,157	1 st Thursday after the 1 st Monday at 7p.m. EST
Broward	1,667,509	Every Tuesday at 10:00a.m.(Except for 5 th Tuesday); Public Hearings at 2:00p.m.,2nd and 4 th Tuesdays	Madison	18,932	1 st & 3 rd Wednesday at 9a.m.
Calhoun	13,231	1 st Tuesday at 2:00 p.m., CST 3 rd Tuesday at 5 p.m.,CST	Manatee	277,362	Every Tuesday at 9 a.m.-except 2 nd Tuesday (work sessions)
Charlotte	148,521	Every 2 nd & 4 th Tuesday at 9 a.m.	Marion	271,096	1 st & 3 rd Tuesday at 9 a.m.
Citrus	123,008	1 st , 2 nd & 4 th Tuesday at 1 p.m.	Martin	131,051	Every Tuesday at 9 a.m.
Clay	149,901	2 nd & 4 th Tuesday at 2 p.m., EST	Miami-Dade	2,312,348	1 st & 3 rd Tuesday at 9 a.m.
Collier	277,457	2 nd & 4 th Tuesday at 9 a.m.	Monroe	81,140	Every 3 rd Wed. & Thurs. of each month at 9:00 am
Columbia	58,372	1 st and 3 rd Thursday at 7 p.m.	Nassau	61,094	2 nd Monday at 9 a.m., 3 rd and 4 th Monday at 6 p.m.

County	Population	Commission Meeting Schedule	County	Population	Commission Meeting Schedule
Desoto	32,798	2 nd Tuesday at 9 a.m. 4 th Tuesday at 6:30 p.m.	Okaloosa	176,965	1 st & 3 rd Tuesdays, 8:30 a.m. & 6 p.m., CST
Dixie	14,459	1 st Thursday at 10a.m. 3 rd Thursday 7:30p.m.	Okeechobee	36,551	2 nd & 4 th Thursday at 9 a.m.
Duval	800,394	2 nd & 4 th Tuesday at 6:00 p.m.	Orange	955,500	Every Tuesday at 9 a.m.
Escambia	299,485	1 st & 3 rd Thursday. Public Forum at 4:30p.m., CST & Board Meeting@ 5:30p.m., CST	Osceola	192,982	1 st , 3 rd , & 4 th Monday at 1:30 p.m.; 2 nd Monday at 7 p.m.
Flagler	56,237	1 st Monday at 9 a.m., EST 3 rd Monday at 4:30p.m., EST	Palm Beach	1,181,947	Tuesdays at 9:30 a.m.
Franklin	10,161	1 st & 3 rd Tuesday at 9 a.m.	Pasco	361,456	Tuesday/ Twice a Month. Regular at 1:30 p.m.; Public Hearings at 6:30 p.m. Alternates between New Port Richey & Dade City
Gadsden	45,870	1 st & 3 rd Tuesday at 6 p.m., EST	Pinellas	933,972	Twice a month usually 1 st Tuesday at 9:30 a.m. and 3 rd Tuesday at 3 p.m.
Gilchrist	15,023	1 st Monday at 9:00 a.m. 3 rd Monday at 5:00p.m.	Polk	502,241	1 st & 3 rd Wednesday at 9 a.m. & 1:30p.m.
Glades	10,664	2 nd Tuesday at 9 a.m. 4 th Monday at 7:00 p.m.	Putnam	71,329	2 nd & 4 th Tuesday at 8:30 a.m.
Gulf	15,161	2 nd & 4 th Tuesday at 6 p.m. EST	St. Johns	133,841	Every Tuesday at 9 a.m., EST
Hamilton	13,925	1 st & 3 rd Tuesday at 9 a.m. Tuesday at 6 p.m., EST	St. Lucie	203,360	1 st & 3 rd Tuesday at 7 p.m. 2 nd & 4 th Tuesday at 9 a.m.
Hendry	36,154	2 nd & 4 th Tuesday at 6:30 p.m..	Sarasota	339,684	2 nd & 4 th Tuesday & Wednesday at 9 a.m.
Hernando	136,484	Every Tuesday at 9 a.m.	Seminole	387,286	2 nd & 4 th Tuesday at 9:30 a.m., 1p.m. & 7p.m.

County	Population	Commission Meeting Schedule	County	Population	Commission Meeting Schedule
Highlands	89,038	1 st & 3 rd Tuesday at 9a.m.; 2 nd Tuesday Workshop, 4 th Tuesday-Public Hearing	Sumter	61,348	2 nd , 3 rd , 4 th & 5 th (when applicable) Tuesday at 5 p.m.
Hillsborough	1,054,560	1 st & 3 rd Wednesday at 9 a.m., EST	Suwannee	35,727	1 st Tuesday at 9 a.m. EST 3 rd Tuesday at 4 p.m. EST
Holmes	18,708	2 nd Tuesday-6 p.m., 4 th Wednesday-9a.m.	Taylor	19,800	1 st Monday at 6 p.m. 2 nd Tuesday at 6 p.m.
Indian River	118,149	Every Tuesday at 9 a.m. except the last Tuesday of each month	Union	13,782	1 st & 3 rd Monday at 7 p.m., EST
Jackson	47,707	2 nd Tuesday at 9a.m., CST & 4 th Tuesday at 6 p.m., CST	Volusia	459,569	1 st & 3 rd Thursday at 9 a.m.
Jefferson	13,261	1 st Thursday at 9 a.m., 3 rd Thursday at 6 p.m.	Wakulla	24,217	1 st & 3 rd Monday at 6 p.m.
Lafayette	7,205	2 nd Monday at 9 a.m., 4 th Monday at 5:30 p.m.	Walton	45,521	2 nd Tuesday at 5 p.m. 4 th Tuesday at 9 a.m. CST
			Washington	21,649	4 th Thursday at 8 a.m.

**Review of Agenda Items Presented to the Board
May 2002 - April 2003**

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Meeting Date	Number of Agenda Items				Ending Time of Meeting	Meeting Length in hrs	Number of Public Speakers	
	Consent	General Business	Public Hearings	Total Agenda Items			Agenda Items	To Be Heard
May 14, 2002	17	8	5	30	8:45 PM	3 3/4	14	0
May 28, 2002	25	10	6	41	11:00 PM	6	13	0
June 11, 2002	11	7	2	20	6:30 PM	1 1/2	0	0
June 18, 2002	14	5	3	22	9:00 PM	4	0	1
July 9, 2002	24	10	3	37	9:45 PM	4 3/4	11	3
July 23, 2002	27	7	4	38	8:45 PM	3 3/4	16	1
July 30, 2002	29	8	3	40	11:00 AM	6	23	1
September 10, 2002	21	3	3	27	7:30 PM	2 1/2	12	4
September 17, 2002	39	4	8	51	10:45 PM	5 3/4	15	1
September 24, 2002	35	4	9	48	11:15 PM	6 1/4	14	1
October 8, 2002	23	5	4	32	9:00 PM	4	3	0
October 15, 2002	12	2	1	15	7:45 PM	2 3/4	5	0
October 22, 2002	7	3	4	14	7:00 PM	2	4	0
October 29, 2002	17	3	1	21	8:00 PM	3	4	1
November 12, 2002	12	5	3	20	7:00 PM	2	1	0
November 19, 2002	9	3	0	12	5:45 PM	3/4	1	0
November 26, 2002	17	5	3	25	9:30 PM	4 1/2	5	2
December 10, 2002	29	13	2	44	11:30 PM	6 1/2	4	1
January 14, 2003	24	7	1	32	9:30 PM	5 1/2	17	4
January 21, 2003	11	4	2	17	7:15 PM	2 1/4	1	3
January 28, 2003	14	15	5	34	11:00 PM	6	7	2
February 11, 2003	18	5	1	24	8:00 PM	3	2	0
February 18, 2003	13	12	2	27	9:30 PM	5 1/2	5	1
February 25, 2003	11	14	0	25	9:45 PM	4 3/4	52	1
March 18, 2003	16	9	0	25	8:30 PM	3 1/2	3	5
March 25, 2003	11	8	6	25	7:30 PM	2 1/2	2	3
April 8, 2003	13	5	0	18	6:30 PM	1 1/2	0	5
April 15, 2003	8	4	2	14	8:15 PM	3 1/4	2	1
April 22, 2003	7	3	0	10	6:30 PM	1 1/2	1	2
April 29, 2003	14	9	6	29	11:00 PM	6	5	0
Total	528	200	89	817			242	43
Average	18	7	3	27	9:00 PM	4	8	1